



[4910-13-P]

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 39

[Docket No. FAA-2013-0361; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-026-AD]

RIN 2120-AA64

Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: We propose to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all The Boeing Company Model 727 series airplanes. This proposed AD was prompted by a report of cracking in the left-side chord of the fin closure rib on the vertical stabilizer. This proposed AD would require repetitive inspections of the left and right side chords of the fin closure rib for cracking and corrosion, and related investigative and corrective actions if necessary. We are proposing this AD to detect and correct cracking and corrosion in the left and right side chords of the fin closure rib, which could lead to widespread cracking in the chords that might weaken the fin closure rib structure and result in loss of airplane control due to lack of horizontal stabilizer support.

DATES: We must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For Boeing service information identified in this proposed AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P. O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206-544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may review copies of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Examining the AD Docket

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <http://www.regulations.gov>; or in person at the Docket Management Facility between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this proposed AD, the regulatory evaluation, any comments received, and other information. The street address for the Docket Office (phone: 800-647-5527) is in the ADDRESSES section. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6577; fax: 425-917-6590; email: berhane.alazar@faa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Comments Invited

We invite you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under the ADDRESSES section. Include “Docket No. FAA-2013-0361; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-026-AD” at the beginning of your comments. We specifically invite comments on the overall regulatory, economic, environmental, and energy aspects of this proposed AD. We will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposed AD because of those comments.

We will post all comments we receive, without change, to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. We will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact we receive about this proposed AD.

Discussion

During a routine maintenance inspection an operator reported finding a crack on the left-side chord of the fin closure rib. The crack measured 2.4 inches long and ran along the length of the chord. Cracking on the left-side chord of the fin closure rib is the result of intergranular stress corrosion caused by the material properties of 2024-T351 extrusion from which the closure rib chord is made. This material becomes vulnerable after the surface finishes begin to break down as a result of normal in-service aging. We are proposing this AD to detect and correct cracking and corrosion in the left and right side chords of the fin closure rib, which could lead to widespread cracking in the chords that might weaken the fin closure rib structure, and result in loss of airplane control due to lack of horizontal stabilizer support.

Relevant Service Information

We reviewed Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 727-55-0095, dated September 24, 2012. For information on the procedures and compliance times, see this service information at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching for Docket No. FAA-2013-0361.

FAA's Determination

We are proposing this AD because we evaluated all the relevant information and determined the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type design.

Proposed AD Requirements

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in the service information described previously, except as discussed under "Differences Between the Proposed AD and the Service Information."

Differences Between the Proposed AD and the Service Information

Where Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 727-55-0095, dated September 24, 2012, specifies to contact the manufacturer for instructions on how to repair certain conditions, this proposed AD would require repairing those conditions in one of the following ways:

- In accordance with a method that we approve; or
- Using data that meet the certification basis of the airplane, and that have been approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) whom we have authorized to make those findings.

Costs of Compliance

We estimate that this proposed AD affects 98 airplanes of U.S. registry.

We estimate the following costs to comply with this proposed AD:

Estimated costs

Action	Labor cost	Parts cost	Cost per product	Cost on U.S. operators
Inspections	17 work-hours X \$85 per hour = \$1,445 per inspection cycle	\$0	\$1,445 per inspection cycle	\$141,610 per inspection cycle

We have received no definitive data that would enable us to provide cost estimates for the on-condition actions specified in this proposed AD.

Authority for this Rulemaking

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

We are issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: "General requirements." Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

Regulatory Findings

We determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct

effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Is not a “significant rule” under the DOT Regulatory Policies and Procedures (44 FR 11034, February 26, 1979),
- (3) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (4) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

§ 39.13 [Amended]

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive (AD):

The Boeing Company: Docket No. FAA-2013-0361; Directorate Identifier 2013-NM-026-AD.

(a) Comments Due Date

We must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

(b) Affected ADs

None.

(c) Applicability

This AD applies to all The Boeing Company Model 727, 727C, 727-100, 727-100C, 727-200, and 727-200F series airplanes, certificated in any category.

(d) Subject

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC)/Air Transport Association (ATA) of America Code 55, Stabilizers.

(e) Unsafe Condition

This AD was prompted by a report of cracking in the left-side chord of the fin closure rib on the vertical stabilizer. We are issuing this AD to detect and correct cracking and corrosion in the left and right side chords of the fin closure rib, which could lead to widespread cracking in the chords that might weaken the fin closure rib structure, and result in loss of airplane control due to lack of horizontal stabilizer support.

(f) Compliance

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

(g) Detailed and High Frequency Eddy Current (HFEC) Inspections

Within 24 months after the effective date of this AD: Do a detailed inspection for cracking and corrosion of the left and right side chords of the fin closure rib, and do a HFEC inspection of the left- and right-side chords for cracking, in accordance with the Accomplishment Instructions of Boeing Special Attention Service Bulletin 727-55-0095, dated September 24, 2012. If any cracking or corrosion is found, before further flight, repair or replace the affected right or left-side chord using a method approved in accordance with the procedures specified in paragraph (h) of this AD. Repeat the detailed inspection and HFEC inspection thereafter at intervals not to exceed 26 months.

(h) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)

(1) The Manager, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office (ACO), FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the ACO, send it to the attention of the person identified in the Related Information section of this AD. Information may be emailed to:

9-ANM-Seattle-ACO-AMOC-Requests@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

(3) An AMOC that provides an acceptable level of safety may be used for any repair required by this AD if it is approved by the Boeing Commercial Airplanes Organization Designation Authorization (ODA) that has been authorized by the Manager, Seattle ACO, to make those findings. For a repair method to be approved, the repair must meet the certification basis of the airplane, and the approval must specifically refer to this AD.

(i) Related Information

(1) For more information about this AD, contact Berhane Alazar, Aerospace Engineer, Airframe Branch, ANM-120S, FAA, Seattle Aircraft Certification Office, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington 98057-3356; phone: 425-917-6577; fax: 425-917-6590; email: berhane.alazar@faa.gov.

(2) For Boeing service information identified in this AD, contact Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Attention: Data & Services Management, P. O. Box 3707, MC 2H-65, Seattle, WA 98124-2207; telephone 206- 544-5000, extension 1; fax 206-766-5680; Internet <https://www.myboeingfleet.com>. You may also review copies

of the referenced service information at the FAA, Transport Airplane Directorate, 1601 Lind Avenue SW., Renton, Washington. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 425-227-1221.

Issued in Renton, Washington, on April 23, 2013.

Jeffrey E. Duven,
Acting Manager,
Transport Airplane Directorate,
Aircraft Certification Service.

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